

Message

From: Mack Jamie [Jamie.Mack@doe.k12.de.us]
Sent: 12/13/2022 7:35:59 PM
To: Crumlish, Karen [Crumlish.Karen@epa.gov]; Richardson, William [Richardson.William@epa.gov]
CC: Hanes, James [james.hanes@delaware.gov]
Subject: FW: Delaware contracts with private firm to test school drinking water
Attachments: Lead Sampling_1213_3.pdf



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From: May Alison <alison.may@doe.k12.de.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 1:02 PM
Subject: Delaware contracts with private firm to test school drinking water

For immediate release

DELAWARE CONTRACTS WITH PRIVATE FIRM TO TEST SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

The Delaware Department of Education (DOE) has contracted with a private firm to test the drinking water at schools across the state.

The State of Delaware is actively working with federal and local partners to ensure all Delaware children and school staff have safe and clean drinking water. With the support of a grant from the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DOE with support from the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) began a sampling initiative in Delaware schools in October 2020 to identify the levels of lead within the drinking water system.

The state identified some mistakes in its initial lead sampling, including testing buildings during COVID-19 closures and testing non-consumption sources, and the need to better communicate testing results.

Batta Environmental Associates, Inc., a Newark-based environmental consultant, will retest all fixtures that initially tested at 7.5 ppb or higher and all consumption points at schools statewide.

“It is critically important that we conduct additional water sampling that provides timely and accurate data regarding the quality of water that our students, staff, and school communities consume. This is also an important step to help restore confidence for the public. We want our children, their families and our educators and staff to be able to concentrate on learning, assured that their buildings and water are safe,” Secretary of Education Mark Holodick said.

Resampling and retesting will start next week and will take about three months to complete. Results will be shared with the respective superintendents and charter leaders as they are received from the

lab, and districts/charters will share results and any next steps with their respective communities. Results and updates also will be posted on de.gov/schoolwater.

Currently, all fixtures that tested at or above 7.5 ppb were either turned off or had signage that noted the water was not for consumption, as confirmed by school representatives and state survey teams. Next steps on fixture usage and remediation will be determined based on the retesting results. The signage will remain on those fixtures until schools receive additional information from the Department of Education or Division of Public Health.

Learn more about the state's school water testing program at de.gov/schoolwater.